



SRO

STATE SCHOOL REFORM/REDESIGN OFFICE
Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

Unreasonable Hardship Determination Report

Thirkell Elementary School

February 2017

DRAFT

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Framework

State School Reform/Redesign Office Background and Legal Authority

The State School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO) was established in 2010 to serve as Michigan's academic accountability office. The mission of the SRO is to turn Michigan's Priority Schools into the highest-performing schools in Michigan. The SRO's vision is to create the necessary conditions for a globally superior public education system. To do this, the SRO uses both incentives for academic success and consequences for chronic failure. The following state and federal statutes establish the SRO and govern the office's action steps:

Michigan's Revised School Code 380.1280c: Section 1280c of the Revised School Code charges the SRO with the responsibility of identifying and supervising the lowest achieving 5% of schools (Priority Schools). Priority Schools submit reform/redesign plans to improve performance, and the SRO is granted authority to implement intervention if academic progress is not made (i.e. CEO operator for multiple schools, State School Reform/Redesign District (SSRRD), etc.). Priority Schools are required to submit monitoring reports to the SRO in a manner and frequency as determined by the SRO. The statute also provides exemptions for districts under emergency management.

Michigan's Executive Order No. 2015-9: Executive Order 2015-9 transferred the SRO from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB). It also transferred all authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities assigned to MDE and the Superintendent of Public Instruction under MCL 380.1280c to the SRO.

Michigan Public Act 192 (i.e. Enrolled House Bill 5384): The law divides the Detroit Public School District (DPS) into two separate districts and requires the SRO to mandate school closures via specified stipulations.

Under these statutes, the State School Reform/Redesign Office must make notifications and issue orders to Public School Academy Authorizers and/or Traditional Public School Superintendents/Board Presidents establishing different levels of accountability based on the performance of the schools they operate/authorize.

Purpose

On January 20, 2017, the SRO published the order subjecting **Thirkell Elementary School** to a Next Level of Accountability pending an Unreasonable Hardship Determination as required under subsection 391(3), MCL 380.391(3). The purpose of this report is to:

- Outline the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process
- Detail the findings of the Unreasonable Hardship Review
- Publish the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination for **Thirkell Elementary School**, and
- Detail next steps that the SRO recommends in light of the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

Unreasonable Hardship Review Process

In accordance with MCL 380.391(3), the SRO must complete an analysis of whether closure of **Thirkell Elementary School** will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending **Thirkell Elementary School**. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure to determine if closing the identified school(s) would result in an unreasonable hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that the closure of a failing school does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. The SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review will consist of three parts:

1. **Part 1:** A comprehensive review of all available data related to the past and current performance of the identified school(s)
2. **Part 2:** An academic and an operational on-site review
3. **Part 3:** A detailed examination of other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure.

A set of research-based Turnaround Practices served as the framework for the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review. The Turnaround Practices¹ are based on both academic and practice-based research on the common characteristics of successful turnaround schools and are organized into five different domains:

- **Domain 1:** Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration
- **Domain 2:** Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction
- **Domain 3:** Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students
- **Domain 4:** School Climate and Culture
- **Domain 5:** District System: Districts develop systems to support, monitor, and sustain turnaround efforts

By structuring the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review around these domains the SRO is acknowledging that in determining unreasonable hardship one must not only examine historic performance but must also work intimately with local community members and educators to determine if the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround.

All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process have informed the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination, which consists of a series of 3 Key Questions:

- **Question 1:** Are the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?
- **Question 2:** Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?
- **Question 3:** Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

¹ See Edmonds, 1979; Bryk et al., 2010; Marzano, 2003; Newmann et al., 2001; Lane et al., 2014)

Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 1: Data Review

In an effort to inform the Unreasonable Hardship Determination, the SRO requested a comprehensive set of both academic, cultural, and operational data from **Thirkell Elementary School**. The data provided can be viewed in Appendix A. In reviewing this data as well as previously state-reported academic data, the SRO has identified the following Key Takeaways related to the past, and current realities of **Thirkell Elementary School**.

Data Review Key Takeaways

- **Academic (Domains 2 and 3)**
 - Proficiency
 - The mathematics proficiency rate was [REDACTED] in 2016; a slight improvement from [REDACTED] in 2015.
 - The English Language Arts proficiency rate was in 2016 was 6.83%.
 - The Science proficiency was [REDACTED] a decrease from 5.21% in 2015.
 - The Social Studies proficiency rate was [REDACTED] in 2016.
 - Proficiency rates for Students with Disabilities in 2016 for both mathematics and ELA was less than the all students group.
- **Climate and Culture (Domains 3 and 4)**
 - Enrollment
 - Enrollment has increased to 645 in 2016 from 507 in 2014. This is attributed primarily to addition 7th and then 8th grade in 2015 and 2016.
 - Enrollment in Kindergarten has increased from 81 in 2014 to 98 in 2016.
 - Attendance
 - The attendance rate was 85.5% in 2016.
 - The percent of students chronically absent was 67.9% in 2016.
- **Professional (Domains 1 and 5)**
 - Teacher Evaluation
 - The percent of highly effective teachers decreased from 93% in 2015 to 62% in 2016.

Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2a: Academic On-Site Review

On February 16, 2017, two representatives of the SRO conducted the Academic On-Site Review for **Thirkell Elementary School**. The purpose of this visit was to gain current and school-specific information related to the current academic realities of **Thirkell Elementary School** from its building leaders, teachers, parents and community members. The Academic On-Site Review was structured as follows:

- Interviews with Building Leadership
- Building Walk-Through with Classroom Observations
- Teacher Leader Focus Group
- Student Focus Group
- Parent/Community Focus Group

In a letter sent on January 27, 2017, the SRO requested that **Thirkell Elementary School** nominate both teacher leaders as well as parents and community members to participate in the Academic On-Site Review.

The review was structured around the research-based Turnaround Practices and questions that served to frame both the interviews as well as the focus group discussions. Responses from each conversation were analyzed and evaluated for their alignment with key indicators of best practices for high-gain, rapid turnaround schools. The following pages provide the results from the site visit. Rubric ratings (see below) and corresponding evidence (in bulleted form) is provided for each Turnaround Practice component.

Rubric Descriptors

| Strong alignment with best practice | Moderate alignment with best practice | Low alignment with best practice |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All indicators are evident and there is strong evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction. | Some of the indicators are evident and there is some evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction. | A few or none of the indicators are evident and/or there is little to no evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively. |

A key purpose of the site visit is to assess each school's capacity to engage in accelerated turnaround and to inform decisions regarding unreasonable hardship. As such, site reviewers and the SRO are focused on the following overarching questions.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Domain 1: Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school have a collaborative environment (e.g., sufficient teaming structures and ways of working together) that can lead to accelerated instructional improvement? • Does the school leadership have systems in place to monitor and support the implementation of improvement strategies, including the use of frequent classroom observations? | <p>Domain 2: Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school utilize a common core curriculum that is instructionally coherent and that displays a strong understanding of high quality instruction, among teachers and as supported and observed by administrators? • Does school leadership have a system in place to identify teachers that may need additional support, and specific strategies for providing such support? |
| <p>Domain 3: Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school have and actively utilize a system of assessments and interventions capable of providing student-specific supports and subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions? | <p>Domain 4: School Climate and Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school provide a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and professional culture among adults? |

Determining Capacity for Successful Turnaround

Key Question 1: What are the core issues and challenges that have kept students at your school from achieving? How are you addressing these issues and challenges?

Key Question 2: What are the key practices and strategies that distinguish your school, and will allow your school to improve, leading to increased student achievement in the near future?

| | Alignment with Best Practice |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adaptive Instructional Improvement All stakeholders espouse an “improvement mindset” reflected in the school’s continuous review and assessment of improvement practices and strategies used within the school. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school stops or modifies strategies that are not working and expands those that are working. | |
| Respectful and Trusting Learning Environment All stakeholders (students, teachers, community members, etc.) have high expectations for students and value working with and learning from each other. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and students state that they believe that all of the students in the school will succeed (e.g., will do well in classes, graduate, attend and graduate college). Teachers and administrators work together in formal and informal teams on a regular basis. | |
| Instructional Rigor Instruction and instructional practices are engaging, differentiated, and sufficiently challenging for all students. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide all students with lessons and instruction directly aligned with common core standards and aligned instructional practices. Written lessons and taught instruction includes stated and written learning objectives, multiple instructional strategies, and challenging (e.g., higher order) tasks, problems, and questioning strategies. | |
| Targeted Interventions The school expertly uses specific instructional strategies/interventions executed with a high degree of instructional expertise. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student work is consistently improving. Instructional strategies and interventions are implemented with fidelity. | |

Challenges

- Attendance
 - Tardiness, homelessness, transient population, transportation
 - Addressing the problem: Attendance agent, conversations with parents, home visits

- Human Capital
 - Overcrowded classrooms, long term subs, no subs available
 - Addressing the problem: High expectations for each teacher and staff wants to be there
- Parental Support
 - Low participation, no parent liaison this year
 - Addressing the problem: Wraparound services for families

Key Practices and Strategies

- Instructional coaches and SSA
- After school programs
- Wraparound services
- Health clinic inside the school
- Community partnerships
- PLC, SST, and ILT teams
- Leadership and collaboration
- Literacy program

Turnaround Strategy Domain 1: Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration

The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration.

Key Question: How, and to what extent, do you (and your leadership team) cultivate shared ownership, responsibility, and professional collaboration in the school?

| Turnaround Strategy Components | Alignment with Best Practice |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <p>Teaming, Shared Leadership and Responsibility, and Collaboration</p> <p>Distributed leadership structures and practices are apparent throughout the school building in the form of an active and well-represented Leadership Team and grade-level and vertical teams.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school leadership team meets regularly and includes representation from all grades and student needs. • Grade-level and vertical teams meet regularly. • Teams exhibit a strong commitment to high expectations for all students and a willingness to work together to improve instruction. | |
| <p>Using Teams, Shared Leadership, and a Collaborative and Trusting Environment to Accelerate Improvement</p> <p>Administrators and teachers (through teacher teams or involvement in the leadership team) are monitoring and assessing the implementation and impact of key improvement strategies, use of resources, classroom instructional practices, and non-academic supports on student achievement.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation: Leadership has the demonstrated ability to adapt, innovate and do whatever it takes to improve student achievement. • Instructional Observation: Instruction is formally and informally observed and meaningful feedback is provided. Teachers, as well as students, are held to high expectations. | |

- Common prep periods to plan activities, address needs, and develop common assessments
- Instructional Learning Team (ILT)- meets weekly to discuss data
- Walk-throughs are conducted by administration, district, and fellow teachers; suggestions, feedback, and support are provided to teachers
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)- organized by grade and content levels
- Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC)- discuss students' needs, collect data, pre and posttests, four per year
- Changed system to ensure more accountability

Turnaround Strategy Domain 2: *Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction*

The school uses an aligned system of common core curricula, assessments, and common instructional practices across the school and content areas, and employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

Key Question: What are the strategies and practices that you and your colleagues use to improve instruction? Specifically, how do you work to improve teachers' instruction?

| Turnaround Strategy Components | Alignment with Best Practice |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <p>Common core curriculum and aligned and rigorous instructional practices. Administrators and teachers develop and use vertically and horizontally aligned curricula and instructional strategies that includes common units, lessons, assessments, and instructional strategies and language within and across grades and content areas.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers' unit and lesson plans are similarly structured, incorporating best practices, directly linking lesson content with the grade-level standards and standards taught in prior and subsequent grades. A common set of instructional strategies, academic language, and other learning tools are evident in lessons and in practice, to enable students to access content. | |
| <p>Defined expectations for high quality instructional practices The school has a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices that address students' instructional needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders and teachers understand the instructional focus and how the instructional focus informs (or is evident in) classroom practice. Teachers have received training and professional development on the instruction focus and related instructional strategies. | |
| <p>Teacher support and feedback to improve instruction Teachers are actively supported to develop high quality lessons, deliver high quality lessons and instruction and to become experts in using and refining effective instructional strategies.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal (or administrators or coaches) spend significant time in classrooms, observing teachers' instruction and providing teachers with constructive and useful feedback on instructional practices. Teachers (and teacher team) use a variety of standards-based assessments to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies and modify instruction accordingly. | |

- Study Island- embedded with all of the standards
- Use of data- where students are, their strengths and weaknesses, strategize
- Strategies: Learning targets align to standards (posted in the classrooms), PDs, gradual release, modeling, common language, action plans based on instruction, and walk-throughs

Turnaround Strategy Domain 3: Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students

The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs

Key Question: How, and to what extent, does your school provide student-specific supports and interventions to students?

| Turnaround Strategy Components | Alignment with Best Practice |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <p>Tiered and Targeted Interventions for Students and Monitoring for Effectiveness The school has a system (structures, practices, resources) for providing targeted instructional interventions and supports to all students which also includes close monitoring of the impact of tiered interventions on students' progress.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are provided with targeted, student-specific instruction and interventions in direct response to their academic areas of need, rather than placing entire groups of students in intervention groups. • The impact of classroom-based and tiered interventions is frequently monitored (e.g., regularly, in 2, 4, or 6 week intervals and often by grade-level teams or by school support teams) and then refined in direct response to students' needs. | |
| <p>Data Use and Data Informed Targeting of Interventions Administrators and teachers use a variety of ongoing assessments (formative, benchmark, and summative) to frequently and continually assess instructional effectiveness and to identify students' individual academic needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of valid and reliable assessments (standards-based and performance assessments) are used consistently, within and across grades and content area. • Administrators and teachers are using assessment to identify the specific students needing additional support and the targeted areas of need for each specific student. | |

- Programs/Community Partners: Beyond Basics, Gleaners, Girl Scouts, Wayne State University, etc.
- Character education program
- 21st Century
- Professional Development for staff
- ILCs
- After school programs
- MAP and NWEA scores
- Teachers reported shared leadership and a belief in the principal's leadership.

Turnaround Strategy Domain 4: School Climate and Culture

The school has established a climate and culture that provides a safe, orderly and respectful environment for students and a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture among teachers that supports the school's focus on increasing student achievement.

Key Question: How does your school attend to students' social-emotional health and establish a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students?

| Turnaround Strategy Components | Alignment with Best Practice |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <p>Safety and secure learning environment. The school has established and provides a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff and community members.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student to student interaction and teacher to student interactions are respectful and considerate, as observed during the visit. | |
| <p>Shared Behavioral Expectations that support student learning Administrators and teachers have and use a clearly established set of behavioral expectations and practices that supports students' learning.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of student behavior are written and clearly shared and understood throughout the school building. • Behavioral expectations are reinforced through consistently applied rewards and consequences (consistent among and across teachers and grades). | |
| <p>Targeted and effective social-emotional supports The school has identified, established, and proactively provides effective social-emotional resources and supports for students in need of such supports and assistance.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has identified a wide array of effective social-emotional responses and supports for students in need of such assistance and support. • Students that may need or benefit from social-emotional supports are identified and receive targeted social-emotional support. • Data on the effectiveness of social-emotional supports is collected and monitored. | |

- Various community partners are involved with Thirkell to provide services ranging from food and clothing, to medical and mental health services for students and families.
- PBIS program- Thirkell bucks (elementary) and prizes, dances and dinners (middle school)
- Students reported a feeling of support from teachers and a connection to them.

Turnaround Strategy Domain 5: District System to Support Accelerated Improvement and Turnaround

The district has developed systems for identifying schools that are not performing well, and strategies for monitoring and supporting school leadership and teachers.

Examples of district systems:

- *Strategic placement and assignment of principals and teachers in high need schools, including the use of incentives to get the right leaders and teachers in high need schools.*
- *Provision of additional staffing and resource autonomy to leaders in high need schools*
- *Provision of additional supports (e.g., coaching supports, instructional resources) to high need schools.*

Key Questions:

- How does the district monitor and/or support you in your efforts to improve instruction and raise student achievement?
- To what extent has the district provided you with additional autonomy to make changes to staff (e.g., to hire new teachers and/or quickly remove teachers not supportive of your work), to the school's schedule, and in your use of resources? How much autonomy do you have?

| | Alignment with Best Practice |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| District Capacity - Core Functions The District has established and/or provides schools with base supports necessary for effective teaching and learning (Core curriculum and professional development, assessments, data systems, instructional materials, human capital). | |
| District capacity - Monitor and support The district has established and communicated a district-wide improvement strategy, including a vision and specific goals for improvement. The improvement strategy includes specific strategies for monitoring and supporting schools (leaders, teachers, and students). | |
| District Capacity – Conditions and Autonomy The district provides schools with sufficient autonomy and authority to implement turnaround actions, while holding schools accountable for results. | |

- Thirkell receives support from the Network Team, such as provide PDs, walk-throughs, and access to specialized services (i.e. Social Workers or Psychologist).
- Use the Train the Trainer model
- Principal PLC- discuss leadership and turnaround strategies, think tank, ask for support of advise
- Autonomy in hiring and recruiting

Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2b: Operational On-Site Review (Facility Conditions Index)

The SRO partnered with DTMB's Facilities & Business Services Administration Office (SFA) to determine a facility conditions index (FCI) for **Thirkell Elementary School**. The FCI measures maintenance and repair costs against current replacement cost of the building. The lower the number, the less cost effective it is for the district to keep the building open.

All inspections were designed to be non-intrusive and the results were based on observations and assumptions given the factual knowledge provided.

FCI SCORE: 45.4

A copy of DTMB's FCI report is attached to this report as Appendix B.

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Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 3: Access and Availability

Whether statutorily required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), or MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c, the SRO is committed to completing an analysis of whether the proposed closure will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending **Thirkell Elementary School**. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by **Thirkell Elementary School** to determine if the closure would result in an unreasonable hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that any closure does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. When evaluating the sufficiency of other public school options for affected pupils and unreasonable hardship, the SRO evaluates a variety of factors that can generally be organized into three different categories. These categories include, but are not limited to:

- **Geography:** Are there schools within a reasonable number of miles from the school identified that serve the same grade levels as the identified school?
- **Performance:** Are there schools that were identified during the geographic evaluation that also have an acceptable Top-to-Bottom ranking?
- **Access:** Do the students that would be displaced by the NLA Action have reasonable access to the schools identified during both the geographic and performance evaluations?

The results of the SRO's analysis are included in the below table. The number of schools that meet the parameters defined in the left most two columns is included in column #3 and the estimated capacity of the qualifying schools is included in column #4. The right-most two columns define the # of qualifying schools that would not require students to utilize the schools-of-choice legislation (MCL 388.1705/MCL 388.1705c) to gain access and the estimated capacity of those qualifying schools that would not require utilization of the schools-of-choice legislation.

| Distance Parameter (Maximum in miles) | TTB Ranking Parameter (Minimum) | # of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools | Estimated Capacity of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools | # of Qualifying Local Access Schools | Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Local Access Schools | Total # of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access | Total Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1109 | 12 | 1109 |
| 10 | 25 | 10 | 39 | 27 | 1901 | 37 | 1940 |
| 15 | 25 | 61 | 381 | 38 | 2410 | 99 | 2791 |
| 20 | 25 | 108 | 608 | 43 | 2612 | 151 | 3220 |
| 25 | 25 | 135 | 706 | 52 | 2686 | 187 | 3392 |
| 30 | 25 | 164 | 907 | 55 | 2706 | 219 | 3613 |

Unreasonable Hardship Data Key Takeaways

- There is enough estimated capacity at qualifying school-of-choice schools with a Top-to-Bottom ranking of 25 or higher within 5 miles to accommodate the schools estimated enrollment.
- There is enough estimated capacity at local access schools with a Top-to-Bottom ranking of 25 or higher within 5 miles to accommodate the schools estimated enrollment.

Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 4: Final Determination

The SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination is based on a comprehensive review of all available data, the results from both operational and academic on-site review visits and an examination the other public school options that are available to the students that would be impacted by the closure of **Thirkell Elementary School**. All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process that have been detailed in this report, were considered when answering the three key questions that comprise the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

Question 1: Are the academic and operational and academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | The academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround. |
| | The academic but not the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround |
| | The operational but not the academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround |
| | Neither the academic nor the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround |

Question 2: Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?

| | |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | There are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils? |
| | There are insufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils? |

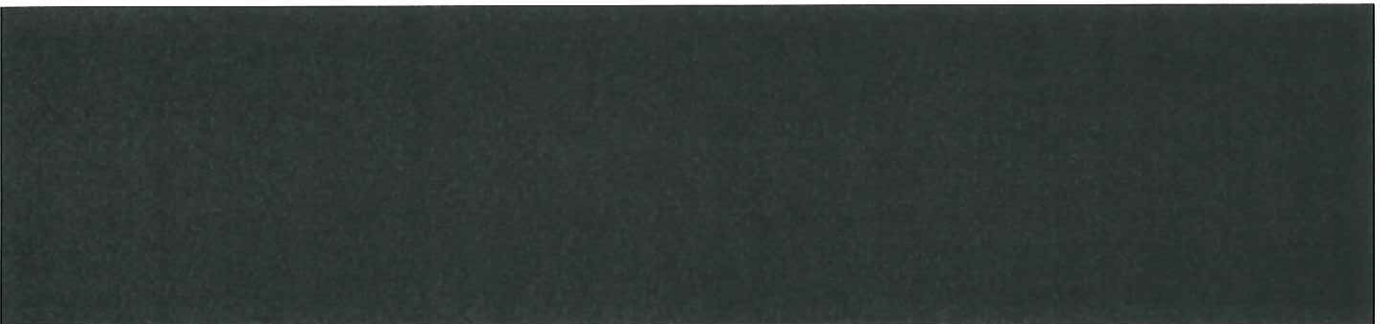
Question 3: Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

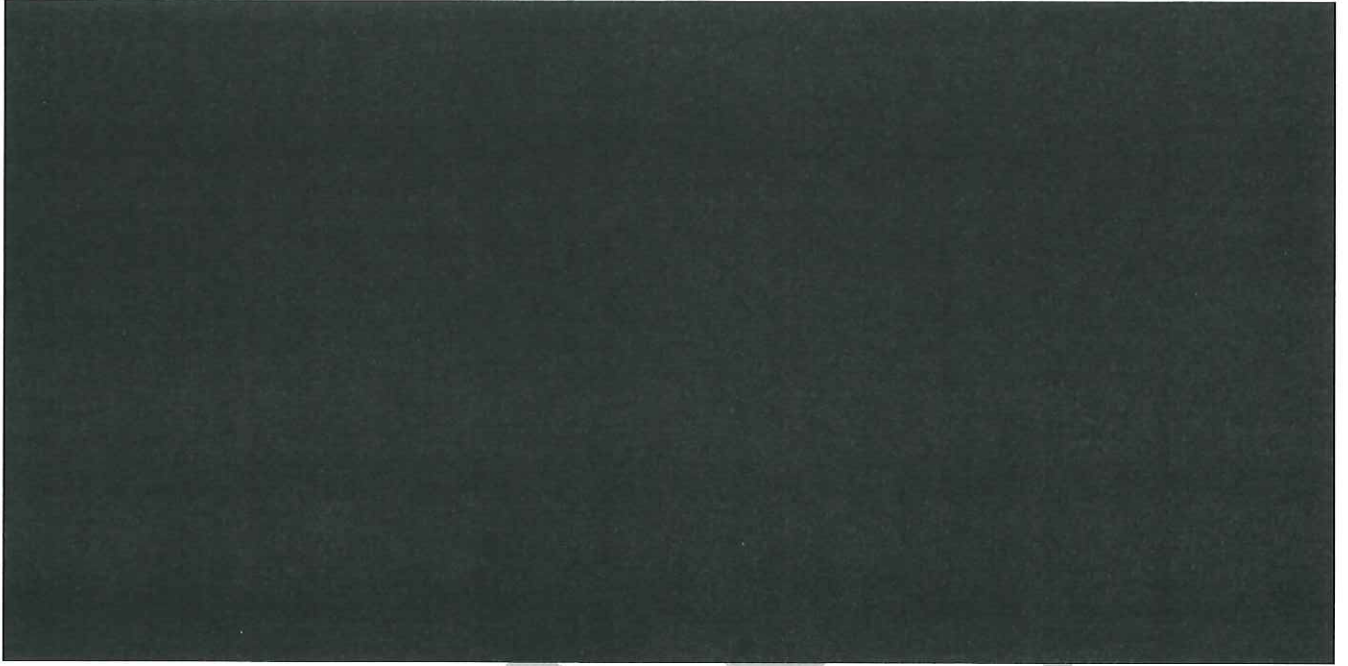
| | |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | The proposed NLA action would not result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils |
| | The proposed NLA action would result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils |

Determination:



Next Steps:





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APPENDIX A: SRO Unreasonable Hardship Data Request Packet

The SRO is committed to ensuring that the Unreasonable Hardship Determination required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c is as informed as possible. Therefore, the SRO is requested that the following information be provided in an editable format (e.g., .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, etc.) by Tuesday, February 1, 2017. Where possible, the information provided will be verified against previously reported and publically available data.

Data review components:

- Academic
- Climate and Culture
- Professional
- Operational

Academic Data

Top-to-Bottom Rankings by Year

| 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

Curricula

- **ELA:** Preschool students utilize the HighScope Curriculum for Language, Literacy and Communication. Students engage in active participatory learning to address reading, comprehension, speaking, vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, book knowledge, concepts about print, and writing. Students In grades K-6 are instructed using the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. The core curriculum resource for K-6 is SRA's Imagine It! which provides instructional strategies In the five key areas of Reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension and Fluency. The core curriculum resource for grades 7-8 is Prentice Hall's Literature and Writing and Grammar.
- **Math:** Preschool students utilize the HighScope Curriculum for Mathematics. Students engage in active participatory learning to address the following concepts: Counting, recognizing number words and symbols, part-whole relationships, identifying and describing shapes, spatial awareness, measuring, understanding the concept of units, patterns and data analysis. Students in grades K-6 are instructed using the Common Core Standards for Mathematics. The core curriculum resource for K-6 is enVision Mathematics which provides instructional lessons to develop conceptual understanding through daily problem based interactive learning, daily common-core review, built-in professional development, along with differentiated instruction to provide the necessary level of intervention. Students in grade 7 utilize the core curriculum instructional tool of Holt Pre-Algebra. Students in grades 8 utilize the Pearson Algebra 1 Common Core instructional resources.
- **Science:** Preschool students utilize the HighScope Curriculum for Science and Technology. Students engage in active participatory teaming to address the following concepts: Observing, Classifying, Experimenting, Predicting, Drawing Conclusions, Communicating Ideas, Knowledge of the natural and physical world, and exploration of tools and technology. K-12 students are instructed using the Michigan Science Standards. The core curriculum resource for K-5 is Harcourt Science which provides instructional lessons inclusive of hands-on activities and problem solving. Students In grade 6-8 utilize the following resources: Prentice Hall's The Nature of Science and Technology, Science Explorer, and Reading in the Content Area: Science.
- **Social Studies:** Preschool students utilize the HighScope Curriculum for Social Studies. Students participate in group routines to address the following concepts: Diversity, community roles, decision making, geography, history, and ecology. Students in grades K-6 are instructed using the Grade Level Content Expectations for Social Studies. College, Career, and Civic Readiness standards and cross-curricular connections to the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. K-2 students use materials produced by the Metropolitan Teaching and Learning Company as the core curriculum resource. Grade 3-8 students use the following resources: MichiganStudies, Our Country and It's Regions. Scott Foresman's The United States, World Explorer: People, Places, and Culture. The American Nation: Beginnings through 1677.

Academic Intervention Systems used:

- Instructional staff use the NWEA MAP beginning of year data to identify students who need additional support. Teachers use the Learning Continuum provided by MAP which outlines the

specific skills students need to learn. Teachers teach those targeted skills in small group instruction and monitor progress through quizzes and the MAP benchmark assessment.

- Regular cycles of progress monitoring in both ELA and Math focused on improving instructional strategies to strengthen teachers' delivery of the core content.
- After-school tutoring through the 21st Century Community Learning program which targets middle school students and focuses on college and career readiness.
- Beyond Basics Program provides reading and literacy-enrichment support to improve reading proficiency through a one to one approach.
- Resource staff provide additional support by pushing in and pulling students out of the classroom to support core and intervention instruction.

Social/Emotional Intervention Systems used:

- PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies) is a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes in the school while preventing problematic behavior.
- RCT- Resource Coordinating Team provides students and families' intervention and support to help students progress both socially and emotionally and improve social and academic success. Students are identified for this intervention through teacher and or parent referrals, attendance and suspension data and assessment data.
- Phonemic Intelligence (PI) is done daily schoolwide. PI consists of brain strengthening exercises that help students relax, concentrate, focus and learn better.
- School counselor and social worker work with individual and small groups of students who are identified as needing behavior intervention based on office referrals.
- Social and emotional supports is also provided through the Girl Scout and mentoring program.

Student Proficiency – Mathematics

| Student Group | % Proficient or Above 2013-2014 | % Proficient or Above 2014-2015 | % Proficient or Above 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| All Students | 23.33 | | |
| Native American | | | |
| Asian | | | |
| African-American | 23.44 | | |
| Hispanic | | | |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | | | |
| White | | | |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | | | |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 21.43 | | |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | 10 | | |
| English Language Learners | | | |

Student Proficiency – Reading/ELA

| Student Group | % Proficient or Above 2013-2014 | % Proficient or Above 2014-2015 | % Proficient or Above 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| All Students | 56.46 | 7.21 | 6.83 |
| Native American | | | |
| Asian | | | |
| African-American | 56.73 | 7.27 | 6.94 |
| Hispanic | | | |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | | | |
| White | | | |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | | | |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 54.87 | 6.67 | 5.43 |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | 30 | | |
| English Language Learners | | | |

Student Proficiency – Science

| Student Group | % Proficient or Above 2013-2014 | % Proficient or Above 2014-2015 | % Proficient or Above 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| All Students | 9.09 | 5.21 | |
| Native American | | | |
| Asian | | | |
| African-American | 9.09 | 5.21 | |
| Hispanic | | | |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | | | |
| White | | | |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | | | |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 7.69 | 5.06 | |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | | | |
| English Language Learners | | | |

Student Proficiency – Social Studies

| Student Group | % Proficient or Above 2013-2014 | % Proficient or Above 2014-2015 | % Proficient or Above 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| All Students | 39.58 | | |
| Native American | | | |
| Asian | | | |
| African-American | 39.58 | | |
| Hispanic | | | |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | | | |
| White | | | |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | | | |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 36.96 | | |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | | | |
| English Language Learners | | | |

Climate and Culture Data

Enrollment by Subgroup²

| Race | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| All Students | 507 | 586 | 645 |
| Male | 276 | 324 | 344 |
| Female | 231 | 262 | 301 |
| Native American | | | |
| Asian | | | |
| African-American | 500 | 576 | 638 |
| Hispanic | | | |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | | | |
| White | | | |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | | | |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 448 | 516 | 513 |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | 58 | 60 | 70 |
| English Language Learners | | | |

Enrollment by Grade

| | K | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Total |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|-------|
| 2013-2014 | 81 | 74 | 88 | 76 | 63 | 69 | 56 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 507 |
| 2014-2015 | 87 | 79 | 79 | 91 | 76 | 69 | 56 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 586 |
| 2015-2016 | 98 | 89 | 61 | 79 | 84 | 76 | 60 | 52 | 46 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 645 |

Special Population Percentages

| | 2013-2014 (%) | 2014-2015 (%) | 2015-2016 (%) |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| English Language Learner | | | |
| Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504) | 11.4% | 10.2% | 10.9% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 88.4% | 88.1% | 79.5% |

Attendance

| | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Attendance Rate (%) | 87.0% | 86.7% | 85.5% |
| Percent Chronically Absent | 66.2% | 69.1% | 67.9% |
| Chronically Absent Student Count | 356 | 423 | 443 |

² Enrollment by student(s) does not necessarily indicate that the student(s) will take state assessments.

Professional Data**Teacher Evaluations**

| | # of Teachers 2013-2014 | % of Teachers 2013-2014 | # of Teachers 2014-2015 | % of Teachers 2014-2015 | # of Teachers 2015-2016 | % of Teachers 2015-2016 |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Highly Effective | 27 | 87.1% | 28 | 93.3% | 18 | 62.1% |
| Effective | 3 | 9.7% | 2 | 6.7% | 10 | 34.5% |
| Marginally Effective | 1 | 3.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Ineffective | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 3.5% |

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Total Teachers | 31 |
|----------------|----|

| |
|----|
| 30 |
|----|

| |
|----|
| 29 |
|----|